

**Community Development Committee
Public Hearing on 2009 CDBG Funds
August 24, 2010**

Committee Members in Attendance:

Mary Jane Laus (co-chair), Claude Tellier (co-chair), Jana McClure, Nancy Gregg.

Town Staff in Attendance:

Roy Rosenblatt, Alisa Brewer, David Ziomek, Nathaniel Malloy

Public Attendance:

Reikka Simula, Jon Nelms, Mary Streeter, Cami Elbow, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Vincent O'Connor, Eleanor Manire-Gatti, Kevin Eddings, Denise Barberet, Erica Gees, Joanne Campbell, Judith Strayer, Jan Eidelson, Diana Stein, Rudy Perkins.

Public Hearing Agenda Item:

The Town is requesting input regarding increasing the scope and range of activities regarding the reallocation of funding from the Town's 2009 Mini-Entitlement Program. Approximately \$450,000 will be available.

CDC co-chair Mary Jane Laus opened the meeting to the public at 5:45pm on August 24, 2010. Town staff consultant, Roy Rosenblatt, provided a summary of why the CDBG funds are available as well as stated the CDC's goal to recommend projects to the Town Manager for funding within the next few weeks. \$450,000 from the 2009 mini-entitlement award is being reallocated due to the fact that providing funding for an activity that would provide for housing for homeless individuals is not feasible at this time. Mr. Rosenblatt described the process by which 2009 target areas may be modified or expanded based on the community input and recommended activities for funding with the \$450,000 from the 2009 mini-entitlement grant.

At this time, Ms. Laus requested to hear from the public.

Vincent O'Connor was recognized. Mr. O'Connor stated that he did not think the proposed demolition of the Hawthorne property was in the letter or the spirit of the CPA agreement. He requested that the demolition of the Hawthorne property be taken off the list of potential projects in need of CDBG funding. Mr. O'Connor was in support of the 3 other proposed projects listed in the agenda.

Roy Rosenblatt stated that the Amherst Community Childcare Center is requesting \$80,000.00 for repairs and improvements.

Jan Eidelson, of Amherst Survival Center, requested \$85,350.00 for architectural fees for the center's newly purchased facility. Ms. Eidelson provided the committee a handout detailing the project.

Reikka Simula and Hwei-Ling Greeney, Committee on Homelessness chair and vice-chair respectively, requested \$450,000.00 for funding the purchase of the property at 1194 West Street. The purpose is for building SRO apartments with supportive services onsite for the homeless. Ms. Simula provided the committee a handout describing the proposed project.

Denise Barberet, former member of CPA, stated that she concurred with Mr. O'Connors position on the demolition of the Hawthorne property. Ms. Barberet asked the committee the following three questions:
Who did the assessment of the Hawthorne property?

What are the specific problems?

Where is this information available?

David Ziomek, town staff member, provided the public brief detail in response the questions above. Mr. Ziomek further stated that he would speak with anyone after the public hearing who is interested in hearing more details about the Hawthorne project. Mr. Ziomek also stated that the assessment report of the property is available to the public.

Mary Streeter, member of CPA, stated that she concurred with Mr. O'Connors position on the demolition of the Hawthorne property. Ms. Streeter further requested to know if Habitat for Humanity has been contacted for the purpose of rehabilitating the property. Mr. Ziomek responded by stating that the Planning board will look toward contacting Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Streeter also requested the purchase of solar panels to be put in storage for future use.

Ms. Greeney provided follow up to her previous statement. She asked that the committee judge the proposal solely on its merits.

Nathan Malloy, town staff member and liaison to the CDC, requested \$26,170.00 funding for the installation of audible signals at 7 crosswalks in Amherst. Mr. Malloy provided the committee a handout detailing the 7 sites.

Alisa Brewer, Select Board member, requested information about the North Amherst Community Farm project. Mr. Rosenblatt provided a brief summary of the project and stated that the property has not yet been assessed for value.

Mr. Malloy also requested funds of \$200,000.00 for the pre-development cost of the Olympia drive project. Mr. Rosenblatt stated that this project would comply as an energy efficient or "green" project.

Mr. Tellier invites further statements or proposals from the public. No other members of the public raise proposals. Mr. Tellier closes the public hearing at 7:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jana McClure